

Portland, Maine Perfinned Postcard on e-Bay

Vince McDermott (#1787)

Bob Szymanski notified me about a postcard which appeared on eBay in February. It bears the RT perfin of the Royal Typewriter Co (R134). It is postmarked Jan 8, 1910 in Portland, ME, and documents a previously undocumented location in Maine.

The e-Bay description is presented below.

WOW! 1910 Maine Royal Typewriter ad Perfin pc

Fantastic 1910 Portland, Maine advertising postcard for the Royal Typewriter Co. branch office in Portland, Maine. Card shows a horse-drawn wagon filled with boxes of Royal Typewriters. A sign shows a picture of the typewriter priced at \$65.00. The name "Blackwell" is on the wagon above the front wheel. Card is franked with a 1ct Franklin stamp with "RT" perfin. "RT" for Royal Typewriter. This postcard wins the Triple Crown because the third feature of the card is also quite interesting. The message is very unusual and thought-provoking. M.E.L. wrote "I saw Post-Office this morning. He was on the car and I was on the sidewalk. He rubbered and took off his hat so of course I had to speak to him." This amazing postcard has a great subject,

better stamp usage and unusual message. Some light wear to edges and corners that really does not detract from the beauty of this card.

The message on the postcard is quite interesting. The writer saw 'Post-Office' on the car, which probably means the writer saw someone who worked in the post office on the streetcar. Post-Office "rubbered" and took off his hat. The term rubberneck was in use at the time, and 'to rubber' was rubberneck used as a verb. Once Post-Office spotted the writer and took off his hat, the writer felt an obligation to speak to him.



In Color

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Editor's Note: Vince reports that he didn't bid on this lot (despite the Maine connection). The e-Bay history on this lot suggests a fairly lively bidding, with 10 bids driving the price from a first bid of \$9.99 to the selling price of \$26.04, more than he was willing to pay for this item. Oh, by the way, does anyone else read this note the way I do (maybe influenced by having two teenaged daughters still around the house)? Was "MEL" a young woman writing her girl friend about a brief meeting with 'Post Office', a man about whom she is at least curious?? And if my guess is right – is this then and rather unofficial use of the post card and perfin? Regardless, it is a great postcard/perfin use clearly suggesting use by a Royal Typewriter office that is previously unreported.